

VALERIE ERVIN

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL

December 2006 – January 2014

AWARDS, HONORS AND DISTINCTIONS

- **Montgomery County Councilmember – District 5, 2006-2014**
- **Montgomery County Council President, 2010-2011**
- **Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Board of Directors, 2011-2013**
- **Montgomery County Board of Education, Member, 2004-2006**
- **Universities at Shady Grove, Board of Advisors, 2011-2014**
- **Chesapeake Bay Trust, Member, 2008-2012**
- **The Washingtonian Magazine, Washington's 100 Most Powerful Women, October 2011**
- **Maryland's Top 100 Women, The Daily Record, 2008 & 2012**
- **Center for Nonprofit Advancement, Phyllis Campbell Newsome Public Policy Leadership Award, 2008 & 2013**
- **Kaur Foundation, Excellence in Education, Promoting Cultural Diversity Award, 2012**
- **National Council of Asian Indian Associations, Inc., Distinguished Public Service Award, 2012**
- **Jubilee Roast of Valerie Ervin, 2011**
- **Outstanding Leadership Award, African Women's Development Foundation, 2011**
- **Montgomery Hospice, Board Member, 2009-2010**
- **Long Branch Athletic Association's Community Hero Award, 2010**
- **Montgomery County Legend, 2010**
- **Building the Middle Class Award, Mid-Atlantic Regional Council of Carpenters, 2009**
- **Mid-Atlantic Political Action Committee, Person of the Year Award, 2009**
- **Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Eta Pi Zeta Chapter, Public Service Award, 2009**
- **Leadership Montgomery, 2009**
- **James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership, Rawlings Fellowship, 2008-2009**
- **John Greeley Award from Liberty's Promise, 2008**
- **Wonder Women, Bethesda Magazine Profile, 2007**
- **Phenomenal Woman of the Year Award, Community Bridges, 2007**

MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Raising the minimum wage**
- **Creating the first countywide Food Recovery Network**
- **Enacting the prevailing wage and displaced worker legislation to provide financial security for workers**
- **Addressing the achievement gap through the Kennedy Cluster Program and the Truancy Court Program**
- **Improving childhood nutrition through the Summer Food Program and universal breakfast**
- **Dismantling barriers to child care subsidies**
- **Expanding access to preschool**
- **Fostering walkable and bikeable communities with bikeshare and increased pedestrian safety**
- **Expanding access to food through community gardens**

LEGACY ISSUES

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Raising the Minimum Wage

Montgomery County is a place where residents can raise their children with an eye toward the future, a place where jobs are plentiful and meaningful, a place that is safe and secure, and a place where those who are sick, homeless, unemployed or struggling to make a living, know that they are not forgotten. Ervin stood strong with Councilmembers Elrich and Navarro to enact legislation to raise Montgomery County's minimum wage to \$11.50 per hour over four years. There is still much work that remains to be done to make sure that working families thrive in Montgomery County, but this new law will improve the quality of life for many residents.

Prevailing Wages and Worker Protection

As a longtime advocate for working families, Ervin spearheaded legislation ensuring that contractors and subcontractors are paid prevailing wages on county construction projects. The law also prohibits misclassifying workers into lower paying job categories; gives the county the ability to withhold contractor payments, if a violation of the law is found; and imposes reporting requirements to track compliance.

Ervin also was the primary sponsor of the Displaced Service Worker Bill, which ensures that experienced employees in the county are not arbitrarily replaced when a service contract changes hands. This law provides a degree of financial security to workers who often survive paycheck to paycheck by requiring a new contractor to offer temporary employment to incumbent employees for the first 90 days of a new contract.

Food Recovery Network

Ervin created the first, countywide food recovery network in the nation. This network redistributes food that would otherwise be wasted to area food banks and nonprofit organizations that feed needy residents. This program is modeled after the Food Recovery Network, created by students at the University of Maryland, which is already a proven success in our region. This expansion is an innovative partnership that will have a strong positive impact on our county.

Improving Childhood Nutrition - Summer Food and Universal Breakfast

Providing nutritious meals is one of the most immediate and cost effective ways to improve a child's health and performance in the classroom. Under Ervin's leadership, the county has increased the number of sites offering summer meals by approximately 30 percent since 2007. Ervin also advocated for increased funding for the Maryland Meals for Achievement (MMFA) Program. She got every member of the Montgomery County delegation and every member but one from the Prince George's County delegation to sign onto a letter requesting additional resources for this program. Ervin was delighted when Governor O'Malley recommended an additional \$1.8 million in the fiscal year 2014 Maryland State Department of Education budget to fund universal breakfast. This means that nearly 57,000 more children in Maryland could receive the benefit in schools across Maryland.

Dismantling Barriers to Child Care Subsidies

Ervin is known as a champion for funding increases related to child care. These subsidies are critical to provide quality child care and to enable parents to return to work. Unfortunately, budget cuts at the federal level mean that local jurisdictions have reduced funding for programs like the Working Parents Assistance and Purchase of Care Programs. Ervin was able to secure \$800,000 in county funding to significantly reduce the number of families on the waiting list. She also has advocated on this issue at the state level. Child care subsidies are critically important because they affect the ability of families to access quality child care, which in turn impacts educational outcomes for children when they arrive in kindergarten.

Expanding Access to Preschool

Ervin pushed Montgomery County to the forefront of the preschool movement. Because of her advocacy, additional funds were approved to expand community based preschool programs. She also convened the Universal Preschool Implementation Work Group to determine how the county would implement the recommendation that preschool opportunities should be provided to all four-year-olds by 2014.

EDUCATION AND YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Closing the Achievement Gap – Kennedy Cluster Project

This project, which Ervin proposed and worked with partners to implement, is a collaborative effort between County Government, non-profit and community organizations, and residents of the Kennedy cluster of schools to find effective solutions to close the achievement gap. This project has resulted in new protocols for information sharing between the school system and the county's Department of Health and Human Services. This information is then used to provide early interventions, counseling and support services for students and their families to promote academic achievement.

Truancy Court Program

Truancy is an issue confronting communities throughout the nation and research links truancy to higher drop-out rates, substance abuse and juvenile delinquency. Ervin worked with the University of Baltimore School of Law, the State's Attorney's Office, and Montgomery County Public Schools to implement a truancy court program in Montgomery County. This program helps to keep children in the classroom and provides the social supports needed to improve academic achievement.

Audacity of Hoops 3-on-3 Youth Basketball Tournament

Ervin developed and hosts the annual "Audacity of Hoops" Basketball Tournament in downtown Silver Spring with the Montgomery County Recreation Department, Pyramid Atlantic, IMPACT Silver Spring, and the Long Branch Athletic Association. This tremendously successful three-on-three youth basketball tournament for high school students generates enormous participation. Ervin is committed to developing innovative partnerships that create more positive engagement activities for our youth. This tournament is one way to encourage our young people to get involved in community life.

Youth Advisory Committee

As a former Montgomery County School Board member, Ervin has always been a vocal advocate on youth issues. She partnered with the Recreation Department to enhance the role and structure of the county's Youth Advisory Council (YAC), which included increasing the advisory role of the YAC to the Council and Executive, ensuring it is a critical component of regional advisory boards, and structuring the YAC calendar so that it maximizes participation from youth.

Pathways to Graduation

Alternative education programs are part of a comprehensive service delivery framework known as "multiple pathways to graduation." This approach consists of a continuum of programs for re-connecting youth to education and employment. Ervin requested an Office of Legislative Oversight study, *Alternative Education in Montgomery County*, to understand how county-funded alternative education programs support youths' successful transitions to adulthood, particularly among at-risk youth. In the FY13-18 Capital Improvements Program (CIP), she ensured that the original schedule for the modernization of the Thomas Edison High School of Technology was maintained, since this school provides essential career training for students.

MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY

Bikeshare

Ervin was the driving force behind bringing the bikeshare program to Montgomery County. Bikeshare stations provide short-term bicycle rentals and self-service, automated solar-powered docking stations. Bikes may be picked up at one location and returned to another, creating a system that enhances multi-modal transportation options for residents.

Metropolitan Branch Trail

The Metropolitan Branch Trail is an important off-road project that will be part of a larger system of non-motorized trails throughout the region. It will create a more bicycle-friendly Silver Spring and continue into the District of Columbia. Ervin has pushed this trail forward. Funding has now been allocated for design, land acquisition and construction for the first phase of the trail and the design of the second phase.

School Bus Cameras

Montgomery County school buses make more than 34,500 stops per day. Ervin worked with the Police Department, SEIU Local 500 and the school system to enact legislation authorizing the installation of cameras on school buses to photograph drivers who illegally pass stopped buses. The goal of this law is to change the behavior of drivers who currently ignore traffic laws intended to keep our students safe.

Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan

The Washington metropolitan region's traffic problems are well documented, and Montgomery County is no exception. Ervin voted to approve the amended Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan. The master plan recommends the routes, station locations and, for each segment, the minimum right-of-way to create a rapid transit system in Montgomery County. In addition, the plan identifies where dedicated lanes may be added in the road's cross-section dedicated to transit. The plan also designated additional Bicycle-Pedestrian Priority Areas, which will promote better accommodation of non-automotive modes of transportation and increase safety. Ervin also passed an amendment to the Plan that ensures thorough public engagement before funding is allocated for implementation.

Purple Line Functional Master Plan

There is no doubt that the six-and-a-half mile stretch of the Purple Line that passes through Council District 5 touches countless policy and quality of life issues. Ervin voted to approve revisions to the Purple Line Functional Plan in 2010. She has followed the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) work on the Purple Line project since her election and believes it warrants continued attention, including coordination with the county and outreach to residents and businesses. While at the end of the day this is a State project, Ervin has worked with MTA, local officials, and residents to ensure this proposed route retains the residential character of the community, improves the overall mobility of county residents, and delivers environmental benefits associated with other light rail projects throughout the country.

Pedestrian, Bicycle and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee

Ervin sponsored a comprehensive Pedestrian Safety Initiative for the county in partnership with the county executive. This \$5 million initiative greatly expanded the county's pedestrian infrastructure and helped make walking a safer and more viable alternative to the automobile. Since the inception of the initiative, Ervin has been the Council's representative on the County's Pedestrian, Bicycle and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee. Through her service on the committee, she has drafted bills, requested worksessions on pedestrian safety in the county, and advocated for additional capital projects. In addition, she made this a permanent advisory group by sponsoring Bill 27-11, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee – Sunset Repeal. This bill also added "bicycle" to the advisory committee's name and added a specific designee from the persons with disabilities community.

Walking to School

Each year Ervin promotes International Walk to School Day, which encourages Montgomery County students to walk or bike to school. Under Ervin's leadership as Council President in 2011, "Safe Routes to School" projects were implemented near Cresthaven, East Silver Spring, New Hampshire Estates, Oakland Terrace, Pine Crest and Rock Creek Forest elementary schools; Eastern and Newport Mill middle schools; and Einstein High School.

Expediting Sidewalk Construction

As the Council's representative to the county's Pedestrian, Bicycle and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, Ervin knows that sidewalks are essential for pedestrians and provide vital links for our children to and from school. Ervin sponsored Bill 3-10, Streets and Roads – Sidewalks – Public Hearing Requirement to expedite the administrative approval process to allow faster construction of sidewalks that are non-controversial, have substantial community support, would be placed entirely in the public right-of-way, and don't require a detailed engineering design. It is a balanced approach that improves pedestrian access in a substantial way.

ENVIRONMENT

Reusable Bag Law

Ervin cosponsored Bill 8-11, Taxation - Excise Tax - Disposable Carryout Bags. This law encourages environmental stewardship by encouraging residents to utilize reusable bags instead of plastic bags, which often end up in our streams and tributaries.

Silver Spring Green

The county's Green Economy Task Force, which Ervin served on, recommended that the county encourage environmental community initiatives to provide educational outreach and economic benefits to businesses and residents. To accomplish this goal, she was excited to be on the steering committee of the Silver Spring Green initiative. The mission of Silver Spring Green is to strengthen community bonds and enhance our quality of life by making sustainability information and practices accessible and relevant to all members of the community and to empower individuals to protect the environment.

Protecting the Paint Branch

Zoning text amendment (ZTA) 07-11, Upper Paint Branch Special Protection Area, was cosponsored by Ervin to protect the water quality and quantity of the Upper Paint Branch Watershed and its tributaries, as well as the biodiversity situated in these resources. This regulates the amount and location of impervious surfaces to maintain levels of groundwater, control erosion and allow the ground to filter water naturally and control temperature. The ZTA also controls land uses that could adversely affect this very high-quality cold water stream system resource that is afforded the highest order of resource protection under the State of Maryland's watershed classification system. Any development must not result in more than eight percent impervious surface of the total area under a development application.

Global Warming and Carbon Reduction

Global warming is a worldwide issue, and the county is doing its part to help reduce emissions. Ervin cosponsored the Council's global warming package, which established a sustainability working group and created a \$1 million fund to support existing and new programs to reduce the county's carbon emissions.

Green Economy Task Force

As a member of the county's Green Economy Task Force, Ervin worked to advance businesses, technologies and jobs in the county that develop, deploy or adopt green products and services. This 30-member task force was created to help guide and implement the Green Economic Development Initiative. Some key objectives of this initiative include: attracting new businesses that provide green services; driving innovation, research and development into next generation technologies; retaining existing green product, service, research and development sector businesses and fostering the creation of new green companies; facilitating workforce training and retraining to meet the needs of next generation green jobs; and promoting the county's green business cluster regionally, nationally and internationally.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Community Gardens

Known as the "mother of community gardens" in Montgomery County, Ervin partnered with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission to bring community gardens to the down-county area as a way to improve the urban and natural environment. These gardens enhance neighborhoods, provide hands-on food production for adults and children, and promote social interactions and produce nutritious food.

Old Blair Auditorium and Silver Spring International Middle School

Ervin worked with residents, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Old Blair Auditorium Project Inc., and the county executive to begin the process to reopen the long-dormant Elizabeth Stickley (Old Blair) Auditorium. Ervin secured funding for a facility planning study to determine how to renovate it as a multi-use facility for after-school programs, performance space, youth programs and community and school meeting space. MCPS and the Department of General Services selected a plan to renovate the Old Blair Auditorium, and progress continues. In addition, Ervin worked with the school system to renovate the Silver Spring International Middle School facade along Wayne Avenue.

Forest Glen Train Noise – Quiet Zone

Working with multiple levels of government and local residents, Ervin worked to establish a quiet zone through the at-grade railroad crossing at Forest Glen Road in Silver Spring. While locomotive engineers still have the discretion to use their whistles even in a quiet zone, they are no longer required to do so. In addition, the county added protection for pedestrians and bicyclists through a series of safety measures at this location.

GOOD GOVERNMENT

Counsel for the Inspector General

Ervin was the sponsor of Bill 33-09, Inspector General – Attorney, which enables the inspector general to request special legal counsel directly from the County Council. This bill was needed to head off potential conflicts of interest and to ensure accountability.

Ethics Commission Independence

When a proposal was presented to combine the Ethics Commission with the Office of the County Attorney, Ervin fought to maintain the independence of the Ethics Commission. During budget deliberations, she advocated for and the Council agreed to maintain the Ethics Commission's staff as a separate office to ensure its independence.

Protecting Employees from Retaliation

Ervin believes that we must do all we can to ensure that we are spending taxpayer funds efficiently and wisely. She sponsored Bill 2-10, Personnel – Contracts – Retaliation, to protect employees working for county contractors who report fraud, waste and abuse to county government officials. County law protects employees who report fraud, waste and abuse; however, this same protection was not provided to employees working under county contracts. The goal of this bill is to help create an environment where a contract employee is more likely to report an employer who may be wasting government funding or creating a public health or safety danger. As the sponsor of this bill, she broadened whistleblower protections to make sure that all individuals are comfortable coming forward.

Fiscal Considerations in Arbitration Awards

Ervin sponsored Expedited Bill 57-10, Personnel--Collective Bargaining – Impasse Procedures, which requires an arbitrator to place the highest priority on the county's ability to afford labor contracts before evaluating other factors traditionally used in arbitration decisions. Generally, an arbitrator makes an award after considering the following factors: past contracts and bargaining history; the wages, hours, benefits, and conditions of employment of other County employees, public employees in the region and the State, and the county's private sector; the interest and welfare of the public; and the County's ability to pay for any changes. Prior to the passage of Bill 57-10 county law gave none of these factors greater weight than any other. The approved bill requires an arbitrator to give the highest priority to the county's ability to pay for additional short-term and long-term expenditures.

MASTER/SECTOR PLANS APPROVED

White Oak Science Gateway Plan, Pending

Long Branch, 2013

Glenmont, 2013

Chevy Chase Lake, 2013

Burtonsville Crossroads Neighborhood Plan, 2013

Takoma/Langley Crossroads Sector Plan, 2013

Kensington Sector Plan, 2012

Wheaton Central Business District, 2011

Clarksburg Limited Amendment, 2011

Great Seneca Science Corridor, 2010

White Flint, 2010

Germantown Employment Area, 2009

Wheaton Limited Sector, 2008

Twinbrook, 2008

NO BOUNDARIES

No Boundaries is a show produced by County Cable Montgomery that profiles elected officials who serve the public in a variety of roles across jurisdictional lines, showcases commonalities among leaders, and shows how our elected officials work together on a variety of levels to get things done for residents. Ervin appeared on shows with:

- Congresswoman Donna Edwards: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aL0cnFYkTHM>
- County Executive Rushern Baker: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g48QpvRzxaU>
- County Executive Ken Ulman: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mx81op9fYE&list=PL5F6BEB3B2C8ACF88>
- Councilwoman Muriel Bowser: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2H1RBclAtQQ>
- Baltimore City Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIX4HmDqiUk>